

A OVERVIEW OF 2000 YEARS OF JEWISH PERSECUTION

Quotations:

- *"Nazi anti-Judaism was the work of godless, anti-Christian criminals. But it would not have been possible without the almost two thousand years' pre-history of 'Christian' anti-Judaism..."* Hans Küng
 - *"The Jews are a nervous people. Nineteen centuries of Christian love have taken a toll."* Benjamin Disraeli
 - *"Only in our remembrance and open discussion is there a chance, a hope, that another Holocaust will never happen."* Louis Weber, publisher of *"The Holocaust Chronicle"*
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Persecution of Jews by Roman Pagans

- **70:** The Roman Army destroyed Jerusalem, killed over 1 million Jews and took about 100,000 into slavery and captivity.
 - **113:** Jews in Cyprus, Cyrene, Egypt and Mesopotamia revolted against the Roman Empire. This caused *"the death of several hundreds of thousands of Romans and Jews."* Judaism was no longer recognized as a legal religion.
 - **132:** Bar Kochba led a hopeless three-year revolt against the Roman Empire. Many Jews had accepted him as the Messiah. About a half-million Jews were killed; thousands were sold into slavery or taken into captivity. The rest were exiled from Palestine and scattered throughout the known world in what is called the *"Diaspora."*
 - **135:** Serious Roman persecution of the Jews began. They were forbidden, upon pain of death, from practicing circumcision, reading the Torah, eating unleavened bread at Passover, etc. A temple dedicated to the Roman pagan god Jupiter was erected on temple mountain in Jerusalem. A temple of Venus was built on Golgotha, just outside the city.
 - **200:** Roman Emperor Severus forbade religious conversions to Judaism.
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Anti-Judaism: Persecution of Followers of the Jewish Religion:

Initial persecution of Jews was along religious lines. Persecution would cease if the person converted to Christianity.

- **306:** The church *Synod of Elvira* banned marriages, sexual intercourse and community contacts between Christians and Jews.
- **315:** Constantine published the *Edict of Milan* which extended religious tolerance to Christians. Jews lost many rights with this edict. They were no longer permitted to live in Jerusalem, or to proselytize.
- **325:** The *Council of Nicea* decided to separate the celebration of Easter from the Jewish Passover. They stated: "*For it is unbecoming beyond measure that on this holiest of festivals we should follow the customs of the Jews. Henceforth let us have nothing in common with this odious people...*"
- **337:** Christian Emperor Constantius created a law which made the marriage of a Jewish man to a Christian punishable by death.
- **339:** Converting to Judaism became a criminal offense.
- **367 - 376:** St. Hilary of Poitiers referred to Jews as a perverse people who God has cursed forever. St. Ephroem refers to synagogues as brothels.
- **379-395:** Emperor Theodosius the Great permitted the destruction of synagogues if it served a religious purpose. Christianity became the state religion of the Roman Empire at this time.
- **380:** The bishop of Milan was responsible for the burning of a synagogue; he referred to it as "*an act pleasing to God.*"
- **415:** The Bishop of Alexandria, St. Cyril, expelled the Jews from that Egyptian city.
- **415:** St. Augustine wrote "*The true image of the Hebrew is Judas Iscariot, who sells the Lord for silver. The Jew can never understand the Scriptures and forever will bear the guilt for the death of Jesus.*"
- **418:** St. Jerome, who created the Vulgate translation of the Bible wrote of a synagogue: "*If you call it a brothel, a den of vice, the Devil's refuge, Satan's fortress, a place to deprave the soul, an abyss of every conceivable disaster or whatever you will, you are still saying less than it deserves.*"
- **489 - 519:** Christian mobs destroyed the synagogues in Antioch, Daphne (near Antioch) and Ravenna.
- **528:** Emperor Justinian (527-564) passed the Justinian Code. It prohibited Jews from building synagogues, reading the Bible in Hebrew, assemble in public, celebrate Passover before Easter, and testify against Christians in court.
- **535:** The "*Synod of Clarendon decreed that Jews could not hold public office or have authority over Christians.*"
- **538:** The *3rd and 4th Councils of Orleans* prohibited Jews from appearing in public during the Easter season. Prohibited marriages between Christians and Jews. Prohibited Christians from converting to Judaism.
- **561:** The bishop of Uzes expelled Jews from his diocese in France.
- **612:** Jews were not allowed to own land, to be farmers or enter certain trades.
- **613:** Very serious persecution began in Spain. Jews were given the options of either leaving

Spain or converting to Christianity. Jewish children over 6 years of age were taken from their parents and given a Christian education

- **694:** The 17th Church *Council of Toledo*, Spain defined Jews as the serfs of the prince. This was based, in part, on the beliefs by Chrysostom, Origen, Jerome, and other Church Fathers that God punished the Jews with perpetual slavery because of their responsibility for the execution of Jesus.
- **722:** Leo III outlawed Judaism. Jews were baptized against their will.
- **855:** Jews were exiled from Italy
- **1050:** The *Synod of Narbonne* prohibited Christians from living in the homes of Jews.
- **1078:** "*Pope Gregory VII decreed that Jews could not hold office or be superiors to Christians.*"
- **1078:** The *Synod of Gerona* forced Jews to pay church taxes
- **1096:** The *First Crusade* was launched in this year. Although the prime goal of the crusades was to liberate Jerusalem from the Muslims, Jews were a second target. As the soldiers passed through Europe on the way to the Holy Land, large numbers of Jews were challenged: "*Christ-killers, embrace the Cross or die!*" 12,000 Jews in the Rhine Valley alone were killed in the first Crusade. This behavior continued for 8 additional crusades until the 9th in 1272.
- **1099:** The Crusaders forced all of the Jews of Jerusalem into a central synagogue and set it on fire. Those who tried to escape were forced back into the burning building.
- **1121:** Jews were exiled from Flanders (now part of present-day Belgium)
- **1130:** Some Jews in London allegedly killed a sick man. The Jewish people in the city were required to pay 1 million marks as compensation.
- **1146:** The *Second Crusade* began. A French Monk, Rudolf, called for the destruction of the Jews.
- **1179:** Canon 24 of the *Third Lateran Council* stated: "*Jews should be slaves to Christians and at the same time treated kindly due of humanitarian considerations.*" Canon 26 stated that "*the testimony of Christians against Jews is to be preferred in all causes where they use their own witnesses against Christians.*" (4)
- **1180:** The French King of France, Philip Augustus, arbitrarily seized all Jewish property and expelled the Jews from the country. There was no legal justification for this action. They were allowed to sell all movable possessions, but their land and houses were stolen by the king.
- **1189:** Jews were persecuted in England. The Crown claimed all Jewish possessions. Most of their houses were burned.
- **1205:** Pope Innocent III wrote to the archbishops of Sens and Paris that "*the Jews, by their own guilt, are consigned to perpetual servitude because they crucified the Lord...As slaves rejected by God, in whose death they wickedly conspire, they shall by the effect of this very action, recognize themselves as the slaves of those whom Christ's death set free...*"
- **1215:** The *Fourth Lateran Council* approved canon laws requiring that "*Jews and Muslims shall wear a special dress.*" They also had to wear a badge in the form of a ring. This was to enable them to be easily distinguished from Christians. This practice later spread to other countries.
- **1227:** The *Synod of Narbonne* required Jews to wear an oval badge. This requirement was reinstated during the 1930's by Hitler, who changed the oval badge to a Star of David.
- **1229:** The Spanish inquisition starts. Later, in 1252, Pope Innocent IV authorizes the use of torture by the Inquisitors.
- **1261:** Duke Henry III of Brabant, Belgium, stated in his will that "*Jews...must be expelled from*

Brabant and totally annihilated so that not a single one remains, except those who are willing to trade, like all other tradesmen, without money-lending and usury."

- **1267:** The *Synod of Vienna* ordered Jews to wear horned hats. Thomas Aquinas said that Jews should live in perpetual servitude.
- **1290:** Jews are exiled from England. About 16,000 left the country.
- **1298:** Jews were persecuted in Austria, Bavaria and Franconia. 140 Jewish communities were destroyed; more than 100,000 Jews were killed over a 6 month period.
- **1306:** 100,000 Jews are exiled from France. They left with only the clothes on their backs, and food for only one day.
- **1320:** 40,000 French shepherds went to Palestine on the Shepherd Crusade. On the way, 140 Jewish communities were destroyed.
- **1321:** In Guienne, France, Jews were accused of having incited criminals to poison wells. 5,000 Jews were burned alive, at the stake.
- **1347 +:** Ships from the Far East carried rats into Mediterranean ports. The rats carried the Black Death. At first, fleas spread the disease from the rats to humans. As the plague worsened, the germs spread from human to human. In five years, the death toll had reached 25 million. England took 2 centuries for its population levels to recover from the plague. People looked around for someone to blame. They noted that a smaller percentage of Jews than Christians caught the disease. This was undoubtedly due to the Jewish sanitary and dietary laws, which had been preserved from Old Testament times. Rumors circulated that Satan was protecting the Jews and that they were paying back the Devil by poisoning wells used by Christians. The solution was to torture, murder and burn the Jews. "*In Bavaria...12,000 Jews...perished; in the small town of Erfurt...3,000; Rue Brulée...2,000 Jews; near Tours, an immense trench was dug, filled with blazing wood and in a single day 160 Jews were burned.*" In Strausberg 2,000 Jews were burned. In Mainz 6,000 were killed...; in Worms 400..."
- **1354:** 12,000 Jews were executed in Toledo.
- **1374:** An epidemic of possession broke out in the lower Rhine region of what is now Germany. People were seen "*dancing, jumping and [engaging in] wild raving.*" This was triggered by enthusiastic revels on St. John's Day - an Christianized version of an ancient Pagan seasonal day of celebration which was still observed by the populace. The epidemic spread throughout the Rhine and in much of the Netherlands and Germany. Crowds of 500 or more dancers would be overcome together. Exorcisms were tried, but failed. Pilgrimages to the shrine of St. Vitus were tried, but this only seemed to exacerbate the problem. Finally, the rumor spread that God was angry because Christians had been excessively tolerant towards the Jews. God had cursed Europe as He did Saul when he showed mercy towards God's enemies in the Old Testament. Jews "*were plundered, tortured and murdered by tens of thousands.*" The epidemic finally burned itself out two centuries later, in the late 16th century.
- **1391 :** Jewish persecutions begin in Seville and in 70 other Jewish communities throughout Spain.
- **1394 :** Jews were exiled, for the second time, from France.
- **1431 +:** The *Council of Basel* "*forbade Jews to go to universities, prohibited them from acting as agents in the conclusion of contracts between Christians, and required that they attend church sermons.*"

- **1453** : The Franciscan monk, Capistrano, persuaded the King of Poland to terminate all Jewish civil rights.
- **1478**: Spanish Jews had been heavily persecuted from the 14th century. Many had converted to Christianity. The Spanish Inquisition was set up by the Church in order to detect insincere conversions. Laws were passed that prohibited the descendants of Jews or Muslims from attending university, joining religious orders, holding public office, or entering any of a long list of professions.
- **1492** : Jews were given the choice of being baptized as Christians or be banished from Spain. 300,000 left Spain penniless. Many migrated to Turkey, where they found tolerance among the Muslims. Others converted to Christianity but often continued to practice Judaism in secret.
- **1492 (Jan)** 100,00 Jews expelled and 3000 killed in Sicily (a Spanish province since 1411). 1400 years of Jewish history disappears almost overnight.
- **1497**: Jews were banished from Portugal. 20,000 left the country rather than be baptized as Christians.
- **1516**: The Governor of the Republic of Venice decided that Jews would be permitted to live only in one area of the city. It was located in the South Girolamo parish and was called the "*Ghetto Novo*." This was the first ghetto in Europe. Hitler made use of the concept in the 1930's.
- **1517**: The Venice Ghetto was established.
- **1523**: Martin Luther distributed his essay "*That Jesus Was Born a Jew*." He hoped that large numbers of Jews would convert to Christianity. They didn't, and he began to write and preach hatred against them. Luther has been condemned in recent years for being extremely antisemitic. The charge has some merit; however he was probably typical of most Christians during his era.
- **1540** : Jews were exiled from Naples.
- **1543** : Martin Luther, distressed by the reluctance of Jews to convert to Christianity wrote "*On the Jews and their lies, On Shem Hamphoras*" :

"What then shall we Christians do with this damned, rejected race of Jews?"

- *First, their synagogues or churches should be set on fire,...*
- *Secondly, their homes should likewise be broken down and destroyed... They ought to be put under one roof or in a stable, like Gypsies.*
- *Thirdly, they should be deprived of their prayer books and Talmuds in which such idolatry, lies, cursing and blasphemy are taught.*
- *Fourthly, their rabbis must be forbidden under threat of death to teach any more...*
- *Fifthly, passport and traveling privileges should be absolutely forbidden to the Jews...*
- *Sixthly, they ought to be stopped from usury. All their cash and valuables of silver and gold ought to be taken from them and put aside for safe keeping...*
- *Seventhly, let the young and strong Jews and Jewesses be given the flail, the axe, the hoe, the spade, the distaff, and spindle and let them earn their bread by the sweat of their noses as in enjoined upon Adam's children...*

To sum up, dear princes and nobles who have Jews in your domains, if this advice of mine does not suit you, then find a better one so that you and we may all be free of this insufferable devilish burden - the Jews."

- **1550:** Jews were exiled from Genoa and Venice.
 - **1555-JUL-12:** A Roman Catholic Papal bull, "*Cum nimis absurdum*," required Jews to wear badges, and live in ghettos. They were not allowed to own property outside the ghetto. Living conditions were dreadful: over 3,000 people were forced to live in about 8 acres of land. Women had to wear a yellow veil or scarf; men had to wear a piece of yellow cloth on their hat.
 - **1582:** Jews were expelled from Holland
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Antisemitism: Persecution of Jews along Racial Lines:

Previous persecution was directed at believers in Judaism. Jews could escape oppression by converting to Christianity. Subsequent attacks against Jews were racially motivated; the Jewish people were viewed as a separate race.

- **1806:** A French Jesuit Priest, Abbe Barruel, had written a treatise blaming the Masonic Order for the French Revolution. He later issued a letter alleging that Jews, not the Masons were the guilty party. This triggered a belief in an international Jewish conspiracy in Germany, Poland and some other European countries later in the 19th century.
- **1846 - 1878:** Pope Pius IX restored all of the previous restrictions against the Jews within the Vatican state. All Jews under Papal control were confined to Rome's ghetto - the last one in Europe until the Nazi era. On 2000-SEP-3, Pope John Paul II beatified Pius IX; this is the last step before sainthood. He explained: "*Beatifying a son of the church does not celebrate particular historic choices that he has made, but rather points him out for imitation and for veneration for his virtue.*"
- **1858:** Edgardo Mortara was kidnapped, at the age of six, from his Jewish family by Roman Catholic officials after they found out that a maid had secretly baptized him. He was not returned to his family but was raised a Catholic. He eventually became a priest.
- **1873:** The term "*antisemitism*" is first used in a pamphlet by Wilhelm Marr called "*Jewry's Victory over Teutonism.*"
- **1881:** Alexander II of Russia was assassinated by radicals. The Jews were blamed. About 200 individual pogroms against the Jews followed. ("*Pogrom*" is a Russian word meaning "*devastation*" or "*riot.*" In Russia, a pogrom was typically a mob riot against Jewish individuals, shops, homes or businesses. They were often supported and even organized by the government.) Thousands of Jews became homeless and impoverished. The few who were charged with offenses generally received very light sentences.
- **1893:** "*...anti-Semitic parties won sixteen seats in the German Reichstag.*"
- **1894:** Captain Alfred Dreyfus, an officer on the French general staff, was convicted of treason.

The evidence against him consisted of a piece of paper from his wastebasket with another person's handwriting, and papers forged by antisemitic officers. He received a life sentence on Devil's Island, off the coast of South America. The French government was aware that a Major Esterhazy was actually guilty. (The church, government and army united to suppress the truth. Writer Emile Zola and politician Jean Jaurès fought for justice and human rights. After 10 years, the French government fell and Dreyfus was declared totally innocent. The Dreyfus Affair was world-wide news for years. It motivated Journalist Theodor Herzl to write a book in 1896: "*The Jewish State: A Modern Solution to the Jewish Question.*" The book led to the founding of the Zionist movement which fought for a Jewish Homeland. A half century later, the state of Israel was born.

- **1903:** At Easter, government agents organized an anti-Jewish pogrom in Kishinev, Moldova, Russia. The local newspaper published a series of inflammatory articles. A Christian child was discovered murdered and a young Christian woman at the Jewish Hospital committed suicide. Jews were blamed for the deaths. Violence ensued. The 5,000 soldiers in the town did nothing. When the smoke cleared, 49 Jews had been killed, 500 were injured; 700 homes looted and destroyed, 600 businesses and shops looted, 2000 families left homeless. Later, it was discovered that the child had been murdered by its relatives and the suicide was unrelated to the Jews.
- **1905:** The Okhrana, the Russian secret police in the reign of Czar Nicholas II, converted an earlier antisemitic novel into a document called the "*Protocols of the Elders of Zion.*" It was published privately in 1897. A Russian Orthodox priest, Sergius Nilus, published them publicly in 1905. It is promoted as the record of "*secret rabbinical conferences whose aim was to subjugate and exterminate the Christians.*" The Protocols were used by the Okhrana in a propaganda campaign that was associated with massacres of the Jews. These were the Czarist Pogroms of 1905.
- **1915:** 600,000 Jews were forcibly moved from the western borders of Russia towards the interior. About 100,000 died of exposure or starvation.
- **1917:** "*In the civil war following the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, the reactionary White Armies made extensive use of the Protocols to incite widespread slaughters of Jews.*" 200,000 Jews were murdered in the Ukraine.
- **1920:** The *Protocols* reach England and the United States. They are exposed as a forgery, but are widely circulated. Henry Ford sponsored a study of international activities of Jews. This led to a series of antisemitic articles in the Dearborn Independent, which were published in a book, "*The International Jew.*"
- **1920:** The defeat of Germany in World War I and the continuing economic difficulties were blamed in that country on the "*Jewish influence.*" One antisemitic poster has been preserved from that era. It shows a German, presumably Christian woman, a male Jew with distorted facial features, a coffin and the word "Deutschland" (Germany)
- **1920's, 1930's:** Hitler wrote in *Mein Kampf*: "*Today I believe that I am acting in accordance with the will of the Almighty Creator: by defending myself against the Jew, I am fighting for the work of the Lord.*" The *Protocols* are used by the Nazis to whip up public hatred of the Jews in the 1930's. Widespread pogroms occur in Greece, Hungary, Mexico, Poland, Rumania, and the USSR. Radio programs by many conservative American clergy, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, frequently attacked Jews. Reverend Fr. Charles E Coughlin was one of the best

known. *"In the 1930's, radio audiences heard him rail against the threat of Jews to America's economy and defend Hitler's treatment of Jews as justified in the fight against communism."* Other conservative Christian leaders, such as Frank Norris and John Straton supported the Jews.

Discrimination against Jews in North America is widespread. Many universities set limits on the maximum number of Jewish students that they would accept. Harvard accepted all students on the basis of merit until after World War I when the percentage of Jewish students approached 15%. At that time they installed an informal quota system. In 1941, Princeton had fewer than 2% Jews in their student body. Jews were routinely barred from country clubs, prestigious neighborhoods, etc.

- **1933:** Hitler took power in Germany. Jews *"were barred from civil service, legal professions and universities, were not allowed to teach in schools and could not be editors of newspapers."* (3) Two years later, Jews were no longer considered citizens.
- **1934:** Various laws were enacted in Germany to force Jews out of schools and professions.
- **1935:** The Nazis passed the *Nuremberg Laws* restricting citizenship to those of *"German or related blood."* Jews became stateless.
- **1936:** Cardinal Hlound of Poland urged Catholics to boycott Jewish businesses.
- **1938:** On NOV-9, the Nazi government in Germany sent storm troopers, the SS and the Hitler Youth on a pogrom that killed 91 Jews, injured hundreds, burned 177 synagogues and looted 7,500 Jewish stores. Broken glass could be seen everywhere; the glass gave this event its name of Kristallnacht, the Night of Broken Glass.
- **1938:** Hitler brought back century-old church law, ordering all Jews to wear a yellow Star of David as identification. A few hundred thousand Jews are allowed to leave Germany after they give all of their assets to the government.
- **1939:** The Holocaust, the systematic extermination of Jews in Germany begins. The process only ended in 1945 with the conclusion of World War II. Approximately 6 million Jews (1.5 million of them children), 400 thousand Roma (Gypsies) and others were slaughtered. Some were killed by death squads; others were slowly killed in trucks with carbon monoxide; others were gassed in large groups in Auschwitz, Dacau, Sobibor, Treblinka and other extermination camps. Officially, the holocaust was described by the Nazis as subjecting Jews *"to special treatment"* or as a *"solution of the Jewish question."* Gold taken from the teeth of the victims was recycled; hair was used in the manufacture of mattresses. In the Buchenwald extermination camp, lampshades were made out of human skin; however, this appears to be an isolated incident. A rumor spread that Jewish corpses were routinely converted into soap. However, the story appears to be false.
- **1940:** The Vichy government of France collaborated with Nazi Germany by freezing about 80,000 Jewish bank accounts. During the next four years, they deported about 76,000 Jews to Nazi death camps; only about 2,500 survived. It was only in 1995 that a French president, Jacques Chirac, *"was able to admit that the state bore a heavy share of responsibility in the mass round-ups and deportations of Jews, as well as in the property and asset seizures that were carried out with the active help of the Vichy regime."*
- **1941:** The *Holocaust Museum* in Washington DC estimates that 13,000 Jews died on 1941-JUN-19 during a pogrom in Bucharest, Romania. It was ordered by the pro-Nazi Romanian regime of

Marshal Ion Antonescu. The current government has admitted that this atrocity happened, but most Romanians continue to deny that the Jews were killed on orders from their government.

- **1942:** From JUL-28 to 31, almost 18,000 inhabitants of the Minsk ghetto in what is now Belarus were exterminated. This was in addition to 5,000 to 15,000 who had been massacred in earlier pogroms in that city. This was just one of many such pogroms during World War II.
 - **1946:** Even though World War II ended the year before, antisemitic pogroms continued, particularly in Poland.
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Persecution of Jewish Physicians by the Church

Medicine in Europe during the Middle Ages found itself restricted by the Christian Church. The church taught that it was irreligious to seek a natural cure from a physician when one could obtain supernatural help from a priest. Some church leaders criticized medical schools because they taught that diseases and disorders came from natural means and not from the evil efforts of Satan.

With medicine in such ill repute among Christians, much of the leadership by the 10th century was provided by Jews and Muslim scholars. Jews were largely responsible for founding the medical Schools at Salerno and Montpellier in the 10th century.

Pope Eugene IV, Nicholas V and Calixtus III forbade Christians from using the services of a Jewish physician. The *Trullanean Council* in the 8th century; *Béziers Council & Alby Council* in the 13th century; *Avignon council & Salamanca Council* in the 14th century, the *Synod of Bamberg* in the 15th century; the *Council of Avignon* in the 16th century, etc. also ordered Christians to not seek healing from Jewish physicians and surgeons. This continued even into the 17th century when the city of Hall in Würtemberg (in what is now Germany) granted some privileges to a Jewish physician "*on account of his admirable experience and skill.*" The clergy of Hall complained that "*it were better to die with Christ than to be cured by a Jew doctor aided by the devil.*" (17)

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